

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 SS-15 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 R

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S/S: F. ORTIZ (SUBS)
ARA: MR. ROGERS (SUBS)

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Z O 040352Z JUL 75 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY FLASH
INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 158778 TOSEC 050150

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PN, PFOR

SUBJECT: U.S. PANAMA TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

REF: TOSEC 050141 (STATE 158604)

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT WHICH AMBASSADOR
JORDAN ISSUED IN PANAMA CITY THIS AFTERNOON WITH DEPART-
MENTS AUTHORIZATION:

2. BEGIN TEXT: QUOTE I HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT TO
ISSUE CONCERNING PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS, AND THE
SPECULATIONS WHICH I UNDERSTAND MAY APPEAR IN SOME
AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS TOMORROW TO THE EFFECT THAT THE WHITE
HOUSE HAS LOST INTEREST IN CONCLUDING A TREATY THIS
YEAR.

IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT WHEN A DRAFT TREATY WILL BE
COMPLETED. DURING THE LAST YEAR, THERE HAVE BEEN
SIGNIFICANT ADVANCES ON IMPORTANT ISSUES; THESE INCLUDE
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JURISDICTION, THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CANAL, AND
CONCEPTUAL ASPECTS ON PROTECTION AND DEFENSE OF THE CANAL.

BUT IT IS STILL NECESSARY TO NEGOTIATE OTHER FUNDAMENTAL

ISSUES, AMONG THEM THE POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF THE CANAL, THE DURATION OF THE NEW TREATY, AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND AND WATER AREAS. THE NEGOTIATORS OF BOTH COUNTRIES HAVE AGREED TO PROCEED CAREFULLY AND METHODICALLY BUT WITH ALL DELIBERATE SPEED AS THEY MOVE FORWARD IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

NO ARTIFICIAL TIME LIMIT FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS HAS BEEN SET.

BOTH GOVERNMENTS ARE, OF COURSE, HOPEFUL THAT THEY WILL BE ABLE TO COMPLETE THE NEGOTIATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. END QUOTE.

3. AMBASSADOR JORDAN HAS CONFIRMED THE DEPARTMENT'S VIEW THAT THIS STATEMENT BY HIM, WHILE HELPFUL, IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO OVERCOME THE VIGOROUS REACTION OF PANAMA TO PRESS SPECULATION WHICH EMINATES PURPORTEDLY FROM HIGH WHITE HOUSE SOURCES. WE ARE TRYING TO OBTAIN A COMMENT FROM THE WHITE HOUSE WHICH WOULD MORE ADEQUATELY RESPOND TO THE CONCERNS OF THE AMBASSADOR AND THE DEPARTMENT. SISCO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, INTERNATIONAL CANALS, NEGOTIATIONS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE158778
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ARA/LA/PAN: SMBELL
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750232-0088
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197507104/baaaaoml.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 SEP 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <30 OCT 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PFOR, PN, US, PANAMA CANAL
To: SECRETARY FLASH INFO PANAMA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006